

CITY OF COVENTRY.



ANNUAL HEALTH REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1942.

BY

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

(A. MASSEY, C.B.E., M.D., D.P.H., D.P.A.)

Vital Statistics for the year 1942.

	Based on Registrar- General's Mid-year Estimate of Popu- lation	Based on Depart- mental Mid-year Estimate of Popu- lation.
Birth Rate	19·3	16·6
Marriage Rate	20 2	17·5
Death Rate	10·2	8·7
Death Rate from Respiratory Diseases ..	1·08	0·93
" " " Pulmonary Tuberculosis ..	0·60	0·52
" " " Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis ..	0·15	0·12
" " " Infectious Diseases ..	0·07	0·06
" " " Puerperal Causes ..	0·05	0·04
" " " Cancer.. ..	1·43	1·24

Infantile Mortality Rate 62·3 (per 1,000 births).

Maternal Mortality Rate 2·5 (per 1 000 births).



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1942 ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

To the Right Worshipful the Mayor, Aldermen
and Councillors of the City of Coventry.

YOUR WORSHIP, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report on the state of the public health in Coventry during the year 1942. The report is again abbreviated as war conditions demand.

The health of the city has been maintained at a satisfactory level during the year under review. There was no recurrence of the heavy enemy air attacks which made late 1940 and early 1941 so memorable locally.

Vital Statistics.

For security reasons it is not permitted to dilate on the matter of population changes. It is a subject which will make interesting reading when the war-time social history of Coventry comes to be written. Based on the Registrar-General's mid-year estimate of local population, the city death rate last year was 10.2 as compared with 12.8 in 1941.

The local birth rate in 1942 was 19.3, as compared with a national figure of 15.8. The corresponding figures for 1941 were 17.1 and 14.2. Both nationally and locally the birth rate shows a welcome increase.

There was an increase in illegitimate births—an invariable concomitant of war conditions. The local illegitimate birth rate in 1942 was 1.05 as compared with 0.63 in the pre-war year 1938.

The infant mortality rate last year was 62.3 per thousand births, as compared with 54.8 in 1941, 63.0 in 1940, and 56.0 in 1938. The maternal mortality rate for 1942 was 2.5 as against 3.8 in 1941 and 3.08 in 1938.

Infectious Diseases.

Notifications during 1942 included :—Diphtheria 162 (258; 212), scarlet fever 415 (166; 406), measles 1,236 (1,414), whooping cough 194 (476), acute primary pneumonia 176 (181; 290), acute influenzal pneumonia 34 (16; 56), puerperal pyrexia 43 (20; 54), typhoid and paratyphoid fever 5 (27; 19), and cerebro-spinal meningitis 29 (53; 36). The comparative figures in brackets are those for 1941 and for the last complete peace-time year 1938, in that order. In the last-mentioned year measles and whooping cough were not notifiable. There was a fairly high incidence of scarlet fever and measles but the mortality from these two conditions was negligible. The figures in general present a favourable picture.

In regard to the special campaign against diphtheria, 11,379 children were immunised during the year, as compared with 4,376 in 1941. Already there are indications that the immunisation work done in the city is bearing fruit, as witness the lowered incidence and mortality from diphtheria. But general protection of the child community cannot be secured until a much larger percentage of children in the younger age groups are immunised than is the case at present. Immunisation must therefore be pressed unremittingly until diphtheria is stamped out. In this connection precedents are provided by many American and Canadian cities.

Cancer.

The cancer death-rate locally last year was 1.43, as compared with 1.18 in 1941. At the year-end, conversations were in progress in regard to the future local scheme under the Cancer Act, 1939. The Coventry arrangements under this heading are likely to form an important part of a comprehensive regional scheme, which will comprise a main Cancer Centre with local Cancer Clinics staffed by visiting specialists from the Centre. The underlying necessities are early diagnosis and immediate radical treatment in specialist hands. In the matter of advice and treatment, the best must be available to all without regard to length of purse or place of residence.

Tuberculosis.

During the war, Coventry has shared in the national increase in tuberculosis. A special table is given in the following pages which illustrates the local position up to date. The totals on the case-registers are mounting. In regard to pulmonary cases notified, the city figures are :—1938 : 231; 1939 : 264; 1940 : 296; 1941 : 276; 1942 : 315. Concerning the incidence of non-pulmonary cases, there is some decline at present in the general trend. In the matter of deaths from tuberculosis, 1940 was the peak year and the curve has since turned downwards.

There are many war-time factors which are concerned with the increase in tubercle. Chief among these is strain resulting from the tempo of war work. Relevant also is the restricted ventilation of dwellings and workplaces due to black-out requirements during the winter period. It is the general view that the war-time dietary can be exonerated in this matter.

Venereal Diseases.

There was an increase in the local incidence of venereal disease during the year under review. The hours of sessions at the V.D. Treatment Centre have recently been revised and the treatment facilities are adequate. In the sphere of prevention, educational and social hygiene propaganda work is being widely undertaken in the city. The V.D. position is a blot on our health record and all measures to combat these diseases are given priority.

There were 25 cases of ophthalmia neonatorum during the year, as compared with 11 in 1941.

Scabies.

There was again a high local incidence of scabies during the year. A special Scabies Treatment Centre was opened during the first week of 1942 and has been in active operation since. There were 2,986 cases dealt with at the Centre during the period under review.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The local demand in regard to maternity beds increased notably during the year. The maternity unit appertaining to the Gulson Road Municipal Hospital is evacuated to Leamington and is in full operation there. In addition a large number of city cases are evacuated to county maternity beds under the Ministry of Health scheme. During the year, the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital opened a maternity ward in the re-constituted hospital at Keresley. Despite all these efforts to meet the position, there is still a shortage of maternity beds in the city and additional accommodation for this purpose is required.

The domiciliary service of municipal midwives has continued to do excellent work, and 2,301 cases were dealt with under this heading during the year. A recent development has been the supply of an adequate number of gas and air analgesia sets for use by the municipal midwives. For those midwives still requiring it, attendance at a recognised course of instruction on the use of this apparatus has been arranged.

The attendances at the thirteen city welfare centres during the year were 53,022, as compared with 38,620 in 1941 and 72,769 in the last complete peace-time year 1938.

There is a local need for a residential nursery for the short-term accommodation of young children of mothers who have to enter hospitals for operation, confinement or like reason and who cannot make private arrangements for the care of their children during these times. It is considered that, for safety reasons, such a residential nursery should be outside the city area, and certain properties were under consideration in this connection at the year-end.

War-Time Day Nurseries.

At the year-end there were seven nurseries in operation and two more have been opened since. Of the nine nurseries three are in large converted houses, one is in a restored branch library building which had previously been damaged by enemy action, and five are in the regulation hutments. All the nurseries are in full commission and they have permitted the release of many married women for urgent work in war factories. Moreover, the health and habits of the children in attendance at the nurseries have shown marked improvement.

Crematorium.

During the year under review the Coventry Crematorium at Canley was completed in readiness for the official opening which was performed by the Mayor (Alderman Mrs. E. Smith, J.P.), in early 1943. Public health considerations have been a stimulus throughout to the Baths and Parks Committee in their commendable efforts to bring the scheme to completion in the face of all war-time obstacles. This aspect was emphasised in the address given at the opening ceremony by Lord Horder (President of the Cremation Society), who kindly attended the opening and thereby accorded the scheme a most valuable filip.

Coventry Joint Laboratory.

The Joint Laboratory is conducted under a scheme of " fifty-fifty " partnership between the Corporation and the Voluntary Hospital. The costs are allocated between the two bodies on the basis of work done for each. In measuring the work a unit system is in operation, each piece of work being valued in units according to an approved scale. The scheme has operated admirably since its inception in 1938, and the work performed in the laboratory is expanding yearly.

Hospitals and Hospital Policy.

During 1942 4,925 in-patients were dealt with in the wards of the Gulson Road Municipal Hospital and 8,411 out-patients were treated there. Reference was made in my 1941 Report to the urgent hospital position in Coventry brought about by the destruction by enemy action in April, 1941, of the wards of the

Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital in Stoney Stanton Road, and by the damage to the Gulson Road Municipal Hospital. The voluntary hospital has since replaced a proportion of its former accommodation mainly by providing emergency wards at Keresley. The Municipal Hospital has carried on throughout as a clearing station for the acute sick. Both hospitals have been helped greatly by the availability of beds in outside hospitals under the Ministry of Health group scheme.

But new general hospital provision on the big scale is clearly an urgent necessity in Coventry as soon as circumstances permit, and in this connection the municipality and the voluntary body are facing similar problems. The hospital position, although of course most regrettable in terms of beds lost through enemy action, has nevertheless presented the authorities concerned with a great and unique opportunity for a combined reconstruction of the city's general hospital accommodation on rational and far-sighted lines. It will be necessary to reject parochialism and to take the big view.

At the year-end appointed members of the City Public Health Committee and of the Voluntary Hospital Committee were engaged in discussing together the possibilities. At the time of writing the matter is *sub judice* and enlargement thereon at this juncture would therefore be inopportune.

City Isolation Hospital.

In the City Isolation Hospital 781 patients were treated during 1942, as compared with 697 the previous year. The ward-block, which was largely demolished in 1941 by enemy action, has now been re-built and the opportunity has been taken of providing more cubicle accommodation.

Sanitary Circumstances.

A substantial number of dwelling houses in the city have been either demolished or rendered permanently unfit for human habitation by enemy action. In war conditions new buildings cannot set off the loss. Having regard to these and other circumstances, it is all too evident that in many cases domestic overcrowding exists.

The Chief Sanitary Inspector (Mr. W. R. Martin) states that much valuable work has been accomplished during the year in the abatement of nuisances on bombed sites and premises notably in connection with rat destruction. He refers also to notable progress in certain peripheral parts of the city area in regard to the extension of branch sewers and the consequent modernisation of the drainage arrangements of considerable numbers of houses.

The work of food inspection, always important, is especially so in war-time, and much time has been devoted to this branch by the sanitary section during the year. The supreme need of preventing waste is kept well in mind; at the same time every care is exercised to protect the consumer.

Conclusion.

The past year was again a very busy one, and I would like to express my gratitude to all members of the departmental staff for their loyal and efficient service.

Once again it is a great pleasure to record an appreciation of the unfailing support and encouragement given throughout the year by the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee.

I am, your Worship, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

A. MASSEY,

Medical Officer of Health.

The Council House,

Coventry.

June, 1943.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	NOTIFICATIONS IN AGE GROUPS.						NOTIFICATIONS IN THE VARIOUS WARDS OF THE CITY.																	
	Total number of cases notified.						All Saints	Bablake	Chelyesmore	Earlsdon	Foleshill	Grey Friars	Harnall	Hill Fields	Longford	Radford	St. Mary's	St Paul's	Lower Stoke	Upper Stoke	Westwood	Walsgrave		
	Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 & under 25.	25 & under 45.	45 & under 65.																	65 & upwards.	
Small-pox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	20	13	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera (C) Plague (P)	3	30	75	34	18	1	1	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria (including Membranous Group)	1	1	1	7	20	21	5	1	6	6	..	3	2	2	..	4	10	1	1	2	..	11	7	
Erysipelas	3	88	277	31	15	1	..	5	42	19	12	6	27	9	4	21	120	3	7	18	11	45	66	
Scarlet fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Typhus fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Enteric fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Relapsing fever (R) .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Continued fever (C) .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Puerperal Pyrexia .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	4	5	2	4	12	2	..	2	7	2	3	3	5	1	..	1	5	..	..	..	..	..	..
Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis .. ..	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	25	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	3	..	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Respiratory Tuberculosis	274	..	7	98	118	53	3	9	29	21	17	10	20	12	9	18	34	6	6	14	16	19	34	
Other forms of Tuberculosis	48	1	9	15	12	9	2	..	5	5	1	1	4	1	1	3	10	3	..	2	2	6	4	
Malaria	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Dysentery	6	1	1	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Acute Primary Pneumonia	176	10	28	15	50	37	9	3	10	4	5	6	11	8	4	26	54	5	4	11	4	9	12	
Acute Influenzal Pneumonia	34	..	..	8	6	16	4	1	3	..	1	1	..	..	1	19	2	..	..	..	1	4	1
Acute Encephalitis Lethargica .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Acute Polio-Encephalitis	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chicken Pox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles	1236	44	547	625	16	3	1	19	94	51	34	50	118	16	18	211	176	8	29	96	65	38	213	
Whooping Cough	194	18	114	57	5	..	..	2	41	..	12	2	5	..	..	10	51	1	..	18	7	21	24
Totals	2708	111	826	1087	238	286	138	22	53	263	123	94	88	211	58	38	323	476	34	52	188	123	172	412

Tuberculosis.

YEAR	CASES ON REGISTER		CASES NOTIFIED		DEATHS			
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
					No.	Rate	No.	Rate
1938	M.	524	75	134	38	0.63	12	0.09
	F.	359	81	97	29		8	
1939	M.	535	88	165	29	0.63	8	0.09
	F.	361	93	99	40		15	
1940	M.	578	115	194	44	0.72	12	0.12
	F.	362	111	102	30		13	
1941	M.	598	122	191	29	0.71	12	0.08
	F.	371	111	85	20		4	
1942	M.	636	124	184	32	0.60	13	0.15
	F.	402	109	131	29		19	

Live Register of Tuberculosis Patients.

	Pulmonary Cases.			Non-Pulmonary Cases.			Total Cases (All Forms).		
	M.	F.	Total	M.	F.	Total	M.	F.	Total
1. No. on Register at 31/12/1941...	598	371	969	122	111	233	720	482	1202
2. Cases notified (or otherwise coming to knowledge) in 1942	184	131	315	32	29	61	216	160	376
3. Cases removed from Register in 1942	146	100	246	30	31	61	176	131	307
4. No. on Register at 31/12/1942...	636	402	1038	124	109	233	760	511	1271

Record of work performed at the V.D. Treatment Centre.

	YEARS					
	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937
No. of New Cases :						
Syphilis	110	60	60	89	60	53
Chancre	1	—	1	—	1	3
Gonorrhoea	301	207	233	249	300	314
Non V.D.	304	132	216	277	211	177
Total new Cases	716	399	510	615	571	547

VITAL STATISTICS OF CITY DURING 1942 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Y EAR.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	BIRTHS.			TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE CITY.		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS.		NET DEATHS BELONGING TO THE CITY.			
		Un- corrected Number.	Nett.		Number.	Rate.	of Non- residents registered in the City.	of Resi- dents not registered in the City.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.	
			Number	Rate.					Number.	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births	Number.	Rate.
1937	206,500	3306	3254	15.7	2154	10.4	126	128	158	48.5	2156	10.4
1938	219,900	3724	3624	16.5	2074	9.4	139	156	203	56.0	2091	9.5
1939	—	—	—	17.7	—	9.3	100	129	227	54.6	—	9.4
1940	—	—	—	16.4	—	13.0	238	298	248	63.0	—	13.3
1941	—	—	—	17.1	—	10.1	142	670	156	54.8	—	12.8
1942	—	—	—	19.3	—	8.0	59	577	249	62.3	—	10.2

CAUSES OF AND AGES AT DEATH, YEAR 1942.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 45.	45 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
1. Typhoid and para-typhoid Fevers	2	..	..	..	..	2	..
2. Cerebro-Spinal Fever	7	2	2	..	2	1	..
3. Scarlet Fever	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
4. Whooping Cough	3	3	..	..	..	..	..
5. Diphtheria	2	1	1	..	..	..	..
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	126	..	1	2	75	39	9
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	32	3	6	16	4	2	1
8. Syphilitic Diseases	8	2	..	..	1	4	1
9. Influenza	5	1	..	..	..	1	3
10. Measles	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
11. Acute Polio-myelitis and Polio-encephalitis	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
12. Acute Infectious Encephalitis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
13. Cancer of buccal cavity and œsophagus (M), uterus (F)	42	..	..	..	2	17	23
14. Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	52	..	..	..	3	25	24
15. Cancer of Breast	15	..	..	..	4	5	6
16. Cancer of all other sites	188	..	..	..	26	87	75
17. Diabetes	22	..	..	..	3	9	10
18. Intracranial Vascular Lesions	192	1	1	1	12	71	106
19. Heart Disease	408	2	..	..	34	121	251
20. Other diseases of Circulatory System	47	..	2	..	1	13	31
21. Bronchitis	72	3	2	2	2	25	38
22. Pneumonia	120	37	13	2	8	20	25
23. Other Respiratory Disorders	32	1	1	3	6	14	7
24. Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	24	1	..	..	12	9	2
25. Diarrhœa under 2 years	30	29	1	..	..	..	..
26. Appendicitis	12	..	..	..	4	5	3
27. Other digestive disorders	54	7	2	2	8	16	19
28. Nephritis	73	..	1	2	10	22	38
29. Puerperal and Post-abortion Sepsis	2	..	..	..	2	..	..
30. Other maternal causes	8	..	..	..	8	..	..
31. Premature Birth	82	82	..	..	..	..	..
32. Congenital malformations, Birth Injuries Infant Diseases	57	56	1	..	..	..	..
33. Suicide	22	..	..	..	9	10	3
34. Road Traffic Accidents	52	..	2	8	23	10	9
35. Other violent causes	64	7	8	4	12	18	15
36. All other causes	217	9	6	6	35	28	133
	2076	249	56	48	307	584	832

Vital Statistics. (Historical Summary).

Year.	Houses Inhabited (December)	Vacant.	Popula- tion (Mid-year)	Mortality	Infectious Mortality	Deaths under one year per 1000 born.	Birth Rate
1586	..	..	6,502	..	..	..	..
1643	..	..	9,500	..	..	..	..
1694	..	..	6,711	..	..	..	..
1723	1,934	..	..	..	..	..	..
1748	2,066	..	12,817	..	..	..	..
1801	2,930	..	16,034	..	..	..	..
1811	3,448	*60	17,923	..	..	..	..
1821	3,729	*114	21,448	..	..	..	..
1831	5,444	*421	27,298	..	..	..	..
1841	6,531	*590	31,032	..	..	..	..
Census figures.							
1851	7,783	*151	36,812	27	..	..	..
1861	8,991	*1,026	40,936	25	..	..	..
1871	8,535	*816	37,670	22	..	..	..
1881	9,223	*643	42,111	20	3'3	150	35'4
1891	11,496	*284	52,724	18'5	1'7	142	32'0
1901	15,571	353	69,978	16'96	1'9	153'7	29'8
1911	23,515	95	106,349	13'7	1'4	109'3	28'0
1921	28,355	502†	128,157	11'3	0'7	83'6	23'2
1931	41,275	917†	167,083	10'1	0'2	67'7	15'7
Ten Years' Average.							
1897	†12,440	73	61,234	16'8	1'8	157	31'3
1911	23,515	95	107,287	13'3	2'08	109'8	26'9
1912	24,590	50	111,166	11'9	1'35	76'1	26'4
1913	25,051	113	115,064	11'4	0'84	91'6	26'0
1914	25,860	99	119,003	11'7	0'70	84'6	26'9
1915	26,667	56	122,982	12'9	1'39	87'8	23'8
1916	27,366	12	127,089	10'9	1'23	87'5	23'5
1917	27,531	15	130,000	10'4	0'47	78'5	20'2
1918	27,735	25	133,000	14'6	0'42	92'5	20'7
1919	27,829	20	136,000	9'3	0'32	82'8	18'2
1920	27,973	48	130,000	9'8	0'35	76'0	25'0
1921	28,355	502†	128,157	10'2	0'25	79'3	22'1
1922	28,661	72	129,000	10'6	0'34	70'4	18'9
1923	29,414	40	130,500	9'3	0'20	64'9	16'9
1924	29,685	90	132,000	9'6	0'19	79'4	16'0
1925	30,199	83	133,500	10'6	0'30	77'1	16'3
1926	31,034	111	135,000	9'7	0'15	68'9	15'7
1927	32,260	151	139,000	10'2	0'23	63'4	14'8
1928	38,474	175	161,600°	9'6	0'34	65'7	14'4
1929	39,374	750	163,700	12'1	0'63	73'1	14'8
1930	40,519	800	165,800	10'1	0'32	57'0	14'5
1931	41,275	917	168,900	10'0	0'10	57'7	14'8
1932	45,781	1000	182,000°	9'4	0'33	69'7	13'5
1933	47,175	1000	184,500	9'9	0'21	64'5	13'4
1934	48,730	1500	184,900	10'0	0'17	57'1	13'6
1935	50,622	1854	190,000	9'7	0'16	46'5	14'4
1936	54,273	1361	192,360	10'1	0'20	51'8	15'1
1937	57,888	1606	206,500	10'4	0'18	48'5	15'7
1938	61,580	1316	229,900	9'5	0'13	56'0	16'5
1939	—	—	—	9'4	—	54'6	17'7
1940	—	—	—	13'3	0'11	63'0	16'4
1941	—	—	—	12'8	0'21	54'8	17'1
1942	—	—	—	10'2	0'07	62'3	10'3

* This number includes all business offices, whether in dwelling houses or factories, not occupied on the night the Census was taken.

† This number omits all business offices, factories, etc

‡ The Census returns show unoccupied "dwellings"—not houses.

° In these years an extension of the City Boundaries took place.



